



MARY CZAJA

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 35th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

(608) 266-7694
Toll-Free: (888) 534-0035
Rep.Czaja@legis.wi.gov

P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708-8952

For Immediate Release
May 21, 2015

Contact: Rep. Mary Czaja
(608) 266-7694

Rep. Czaja Continues Focus on Rural Schools

Madison... Rep. Mary Czaja (R-Irma) released the following statement upon Joint Finance Committee (JFC) action this week to include numerous rural school priorities as part of the next state budget.

Czaja and other Assembly colleagues identified these goals while serving as members of the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Rural Schools last session. The bipartisan task force studied issues pertaining to financial stability, declining enrollment, transportation needs and other rural school issues, and submitted a report with numerous recommendations to Assembly Speaker Robin Vos in the spring of 2014.

"I was glad to lead the effort on the Joint Finance Committee to ensure that these targeted efforts and investments were included as part of the 2015-17 state budget," said Rep. Czaja. "As the task force traveled to rural districts last year we heard the same consistent message in every corner of the state; that our students deserve every opportunity to learn and succeed regardless of where they happen to live. I thank my JFC colleagues for joining me to vote in support of these important goals."

The following task force recommendations have now been approved by the JFC to be included in the final state budget bill:

- Allow school districts to share certain grades without consolidation
- Encourage internet providers to extend high-speed internet access throughout Wisconsin
- Create a new version of the TEACH program to provide digital learning tools
- Increase funding for high-cost transportation aid by an additional \$5 million
- Increase funding for sparsity aid by an additional \$8.4 million
- Allow flexibility in teacher licensing to provide more technical education classes

The budget deliberations will continue throughout May and June. Final passage of the new two year budget will occur before the start of the next fiscal year, July 1, 2015.

###